

Socialist Standard

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DEMONSTRATE FOR SOCIALISM



What is Socialism?
The Tory Cuts
Trade Union action
Dangers of Racism
Stalin sycophants
1930s literary
Marx's n

DAY OF ACTION
see back page

WHERE WE STAND

What socialism means

Socialism is a system of society where the means of production will be commonly owned, democratically controlled and used to produce wealth solely to satisfy human needs. When we describe the essential features of such a society you will see why we say that socialism has not been established anywhere (nor, in fact, could it be established in just one place; it must be worldwide).

What, then, are the essential features of socialism? First, the land, industry, transport and communications will have become the common property of the whole community. This means that classes will have been abolished, everyone having an equal say in how the means of production are used. There will no longer be a propertied employing class, nor a propertyless working class. Wages will not be paid nor received as nobody will be in a position either to buy or to sell a human being's ability to work. There will simply be people, free men and women, co-operating to produce what they need.

Second, socialism will be a completely democratic society. The limited political democracy of today will be expanded into a full social democracy. All aspects of society, including the production and distribution of wealth will be subject to democratic social control. The coercive state machine and government over people of class society — with the armed forces and police, the judges and gaolers — will be replaced by the simple democratic administration of social affairs. Those chosen by society to carry out administrative functions on its behalf will not be in any special privileged position. They will not have at their command any means of coercing people. Nor will they be materially better off than anyone else since, as we shall see next, in socialism everybody will have free access to the wealth they need to live and enjoy life.

Third, wealth will be produced solely and directly for human use. It will not be produced for sale, but for people to take according to their needs. Goods will not be priced, nor will people's consumption be limited by the amount of

money they have. There will in fact be no need for money in a socialist society, as the principle "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs" will apply.

Free distribution of wealth is now possible because modern industry and agriculture can turn out an abundance of the things people need. A world of plenty is now possible. There is no need for any man, woman or child in any part of the world to go hungry, be badly clothed or live in slums. The technical problem of producing plenty for all has been solved for a long time. The problem now is that the present social system, capitalism, which exists all over the world (including Russia, China, Cuba, Yugoslavia . . .) places a fetter on production because it operates, and must operate, according to the rule of "no profit, no production." What the world suffers from today is not overpopulation, but the chronic underproduction that is built into capitalism. Not only does world capitalism hold back production, but it also misuses and wastes the resources of the world. Think of the waste involved in training and equipping armed forces and of the destruction of wars. Think of the waste of commerce and finance — of banks, insurance companies, salesmen, ticket collectors, accountants, economists, cashiers. Indeed, it is probably true to say that only a minority of the world's population is actually engaged in producing useful things. Then of course there is the deliberate destruction of wealth that is carried out every year in order to maintain prices and profits: the bonfires of coffee and cocoa, the pouring of milk down coal mines, the dumping of vegetables in rivers, the feeding of butter to pigs.

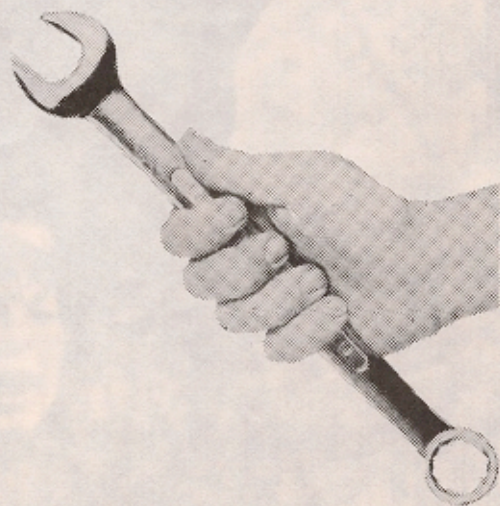
Once you take account of this artificial scarcity and organised waste of capitalism, you realise that socialism (where people will cooperate freely to produce an abundance of wealth from which they can take freely according to their needs) is not only possible but is also the only solution to humanity's current problems.

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WHY YOU SHOULD BE A SOCIALIST

The case for socialism

1. HUMAN SOCIETY

Society is a collection of human beings who are consciously co-operating in the production and distribution of wealth. Survival is a fundamental human desire and the test of any particular society is its ability to provide for the survival and happiness of its members. If men and women are faced with innumerable problems, which are not natural but the consequence of the way in which society is organised, then it is in the material interest of the victims of these social problems to seek a solution.

Two things are necessary for the production of wealth: natural resources — land, minerals, crops, animals — and human labour, which is the attribute of all who possess energy. Without labour natural resources would not become wealth; without natural resources human energy could not be reproduced. In modern society people do not produce wealth without the aid of tools and machines and computers. These are the means of wealth, production and distribution. They are the means of human survival; the means of life.

The relation of members of society to the ownership and control of the means of life determines which class they are in. There have not always been social classes. In primitive societies, when human beings were hunters and gatherers, communities owned and controlled the means of production in common. Because wealth was produced and distributed in common, anthropologists have referred to such societies as *primitive communism*. Classes emerged with the development of the individual accumulation of property. Some modern sociologists would have us believe that classes came into being because some men evolved from the apes, wearing cloth caps, with cockney accents and spanners in their hands, while others evolved with top hats, Eton ties and fat wallets. Class is an economic category, not an innate differentiation.

In modern society there are two classes. One class owns and controls the means of wealth, production and distribution. Therefore, in order to be allowed to create wealth, the vast majority of people who do not own the means of life must gain permission to do so from the owning class. So wealth production, which is the primary objective of society, can only take place with

the consent of a minority of its members.

Does it matter who owns and controls the means of producing wealth? It does not matter who in particular constitutes the owning class, but it does matter that the system of society at present does not produce wealth to fulfill human needs, but to make a profit for the few who own the productive forces. It is not the members of a particular class who are the cause of social problems, but the capitalist system of society. It is this system which we must scrutinise, remembering as we do so that the test of any system of society is its ability to provide for the survival and happiness of humanity.

2. CAPITALISM

Capitalism is the social system which has prevailed in Britain for approximately two centuries. It is characterised by the production of wealth in the form of commodities — which are goods not intended solely for use, but for sale on the market with a view to profit. The capitalist class are those who own a sufficient share in the means of life to live without working. The vast majority, the working class, have no alternative but to sell their ability to work, by hand or brain, to the owners of capital. Thus the capitalist class possess the means of production, but are under no compulsion to produce. The working class produce all the wealth, but do not own it.

The object of capitalist production is profit, but profits are not what many people imagine them to be; they are not the result of capitalists selling commodities at a price which is higher than their value. On the contrary, commodities generally sell at around their value, but profits are still made. This is because profits are made during the course of capitalist production, not in the market after commodities have been produced. The above point can be illustrated by means of a simple example: James employs Jack to produce wooden boxes. He offers Jack £50 a week as a wage — which is the price of Jack's *labour power* — and pays £20 for the wood and tools needed for Jack to make the boxes. So, his capital costs are £50 (labour power or variable capital) and £20 (wood and tools or constant capital) which equals £70. James intends to sell the wooden boxes for £1 each. Between Monday and Wednesday Jack produces

seventy boxes. Calculating that the value of fifty boxes equals the price of his labour power and twenty more cover the price of the wood and tools, Jack concludes that he has done 'a fair week's work'. But James, the capitalist, reminds Jack that he has bought one week's labour power from him and that he must continue to produce boxes on Thursday and Friday. In the remaining two days Jack produces fifty more boxes — £50 worth of surplus value, over and above the wage paid to him. The time in which workers produce wealth over and above the value of their wages (or salaries) is surplus labour time. In short, it is a period in which they are being exploited. What is exploitation for the worker is profit for the capitalist. When James sells his one hundred and twenty boxes for £1 each, he will gain £50 profit over and above his initial capital costs. Had Jack not been exploited James would not get his profit, production would cease and it would not be of benefit for James to employ Jack so the latter would be unemployed. The object of capitalist production is for the capitalist to obtain a profit. The capitalist obtains a profit by exploiting workers. Workers are compelled to seek employment in order to live. The profit system is a system of compulsory exploitation. (The above description of how exploitation takes place is simplistic for the sake of those not acquainted with Marx's more detailed explanation. In fact, workers are exploited during every moment of their employment and the division between the production of values equivalent to wages and the pro-



duction of surplus value is not packaged into certain parts of the week.)

Capitalism is based upon private property and therefore people can only have access to goods by buying them from their owner. Those who produce wealth must spend their wages to buy the necessities of existence from those who own but do not produce it. Money exists as the medium of exchange which is necessary only because wealth is privately owned.

Because there are two classes — owners and non-owners, employers and employed, buyers and sellers of labour power — there is an irreconcilable antagonism of social interests between them. The capitalist class want more power and privilege, the workers want some too. Employers want lower wages, the employed want higher wages. Buyers want low prices, sellers want high prices. The consequence of all this is a ferocious, unceasing *class war*. Unlike wars fought with armies on the field of battle, the class war involves us all and is always close to our lives. It is not only a war between classes, but it has, as a by product, conflict within classes. Worker fights worker for jobs, for sexual or racial superiority, for trade union differentials. When capitalist fights capitalist international war is often the result and workers are put in uniform and given guns to kill one another for their masters' spoils.

The class struggle is by no means an equal battle. The capitalist class is maintained in its powerful, exploiting position by the governments, the laws,

the police and the armies of the various states of the world. The state administers over the battles within national groups of capitalists, but above all it serves to subordinate the working class. As long as the capitalist system continues, the state will ensure the legality of the exploitative process which is the source of the profit accumulated by the class which it serves. From the point of view of the capitalist class the present system is good and just and satisfying. But what of the overwhelming majority who produce the wealth?

3. POLITICS

For as long as there has been private property society there has been a struggle between classes. In the past these have been struggles of minorities to become the new ruling class. The powerful capitalist class of today had once to fight their class battles with the feudal aristocracy. Sometimes these battles were violent revolutions as in France in 1789. On other occasions the capitalists increased their power by peaceful political pressure, as in Britain in 1832 when some of them gained a parliamentary voice. Whether bloody or peaceful, the capitalist classes of the various countries owed their political victory to the support which they received from the working class. Workers supported the radical demands of the emergent capitalist ruling class because they believed that liberal capitalism would fulfil its egalitarian promise.

In 1867 many workers in Britain gained the vote. The Liberal Party was looked upon as the friend of the working class against the avowed capitalist cynicism of the Tories. By the 1890s many workers began to see that Liberal governments administered capitalism in the same brutal way as the Tories. This led to the trade union effort to set up their own party. Many workers believed that the Labour Party would be a genuine friend of the working class, but it too has been forced to govern in the same way as the Liberals and the Tories. The reason for this is that political parties which run capitalism are compelled to conform to the economic laws of capitalism. They are forced to ensure that production is for profit before need, that workers are laid off if they cannot be exploited profitably, that property is protected by the force of the law and that the working class is kept in its inferior social position. It is the system, not its administrators, which is inherently anti-social.

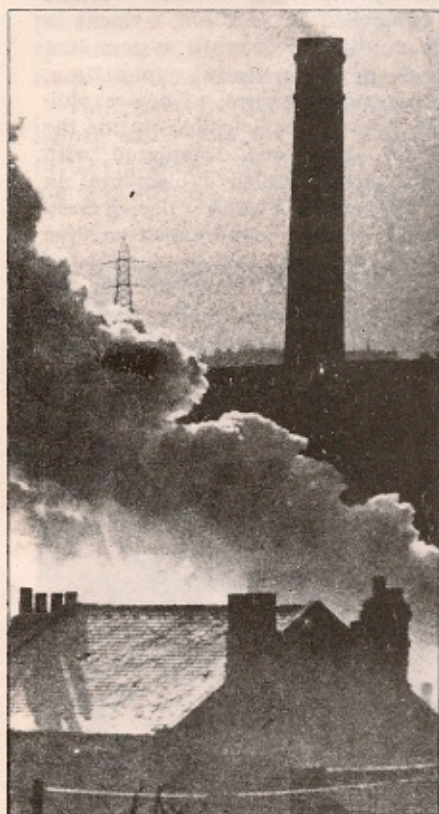
When capitalism was in its infancy, workers' ideas about solving the problems produced by it were unscientific. Some devised Utopias — by no means only a feature of capitalist society — and drew up blueprints for humane societies. Others turned to religion and were informed by the ideologists of

the profit system that they must suffer social degradation on earth in return for paradise beyond the grave. One impulsive, violent reaction to the new system was that of the Luddites whose only means of self-protection seemed to be to smash up the machines which were their masters instead of their servants.

As capitalism developed and the working class became more conscious of its position, trade unions were forced to defend and improve the price of labour power and the conditions of employment. Some workers hoped that trade unions could combine to abolish capitalism, but in fact the role of trade unions has concerned the rate of exploitation, not its abolition. The Labour Party's proposals for nationalisation have been seen by some workers as the ultimate means of socialising the means of wealth production under capitalism. Indeed, nationalisation has often been mistakenly labelled as socialism. But what is nationalisation? It is state ownership of particular industries. The state, as we have already explained, is the representative of the ruling class. That is why nationalised industries have always been run as capitalist concerns.

Just as nationalisation is not socialism, but state capitalism, so are the countries which claim to have introduced socialism, such as China, Russia, Albania, Yugoslavia. The state capitalist countries have distorted the meaning of socialism and dissuaded many workers from accepting the case for a new system of society. Those workers who have sympathy with the bogus Communist Party dictatorships are committed to the elitist belief that although political revolution is necessary, the working class is too stupid to become politically conscious and must be led by an advanced minority.

In general, the political reaction of the working class to the problems of capitalism can be summed up in two beliefs: that leaders are necessary and that reforms can eradicate the evils of capitalism. Both of these beliefs are fundamentally wrong and must be countered before we can consider the political method of establishing the new social system. The idea that leaders are necessary to tell us what to do is based upon the belief that human beings are naturally incapable of co-operation and that legal coercion is therefore required. But the existence of unalterable behavioural patterns (known as human nature) is a myth; human behaviour is determined by the social environment. In the jungle system of capitalism harmony and human co-operation are impossible dreams. Given a system in which there is social equality — in which there is one common objective — there is no reason why co-operation should not be the accepted way of life. Class



society is undemocratic and power is bound to be concentrated in the hands of the monopolisers of the means of wealth production. In the future socialist society there can be no leaders or classes. Such a society can only be created by politically conscious people, not by sheep-like followers. The belief that capitalism can be reformed in the interest of the wealth-producing class demonstrates an ignorance of the nature of the system. Capitalism is inevitably exploitative and undemocratic. The crises, housing problems, pollution, starvation, unemployment and wars are symptoms of the system and cannot be eradicated independently of the cause. Reformism presents an absurd programme to tackle thousands of social problems while leaving the creator of these problems intact. The socialist reaction to capitalism does not embrace utopias or gods or states or leaders or reforms.

The socialist case proposes uncompromising political revolution. Having recognised that capitalism is a system of class exploitation, that the working class constitutes a majority of society, and that the capitalist class owe their hegemony to the consent of the working class, socialists advocate the withdrawal of working class consent to capitalism. Once workers understand and desire the abolition of the present system they must organise themselves for the political, democratic conquest of the state machine, including the government and the armed forces. It is solely to this end that the Socialist Party of Great Britain is organised.

4. SOCIALISM

When a majority of workers have decided that they want socialism they will use their powerful political weapon, the vote, to send socialist delegates to the Parliaments of the world with a mandate to dispossess the capitalist class of the means of wealth production and distribution. Thus, instead of private ownership, there will be common ownership of the means of life. The world will at last belong to its inhabitants as a whole.

After the socialist revolution there will be no classes, for all will stand in equal relation to the means of life. The state will cease to exist as there will be no privileged group for governments to maintain and no private property for the police and armies to defend. There will be conscious human co-operation to meet the needs of the world community.

There cannot be socialism in one country, just as there is not capitalism in one country. The present fragmented world system must be replaced by a united world system. The evils of racial and national division, which now split the working class, will give way to a common social bond linking every man, woman and child on the face of the earth.



A GARLAND FOR MAY-DAY 1895.
DEDICATED TO THE WORKERS BY WALTER CRANE.

In the socialist society the means of producing wealth will be democratically owned and controlled by the community, without distinction of race or sex. The wages system, which we have demonstrated to be a system of exploitation, will be replaced by an economy in which each will give according to his or her abilities and each will take according to his or her needs. There will be free access to all wealth, without the need to buy what already belongs to you as a member of society. With the abolition of property money and barter will no longer have any use.

Socialism will be the first ever social

democracy in the sense that there will be no governments, authoritarianism or imposed morality. The community will make decisions, using the advanced machinery of communication which is now available. In a social democracy the needs of minorities will be accommodated, including the needs of those who are opposed to socialism. Opponents of the new system will be given every opportunity to state the case for exploitation, poverty and war to those who care to listen.

For the first time in the history of human society men and women will live in a humane society designed to meet their needs. But is not such a projection an idealistic notion, a childlike dream? Cynics will mock, when they are first confronted with such a revolutionary proposition. We are not the painters of a pretty portrait of an unobtainable future, but scientific critics of the real world. Our idea of a future society arises from the potentiality of producing abundant wealth which has been created by capitalism but cannot be realised within the limitations of a profit system. Our readers are urged to seriously consider the case we have put and, if convinced by it, to participate in the realisation of the socialist goal. For so long as a single child starves for lack of food, and a single person is unemployed because it is unprofitable to exploit him or her, or a single drop of working class blood is shed in a war over property, the struggle for socialism remains the most urgent challenge of our time.

SC

THE DANGERS OF RACISM

The root cause of modern race-prejudice is the capitalist system of Society, a society of competition and struggle; struggle between worker and worker. For the working-class, who constitute the overwhelming majority of its population, it is a society of poverty and insecurity; to most of them it offers not the slightest chance of escape from a lifetime of constant, heart-breaking effort to earn a living. For the working-class, it is a society which breeds war and strife, in which their masters, on whose behalf they fight, use every device to stimulate antagonism and hatred between them.

From the cradle to the grave, they are subjected to a mass of propaganda which deadens their minds, works on their prejudices, and endeavours by every means possible to turn their thoughts away from the real cause of their troubles. They are the tools of political leaders and demagogues who make them promises which they do not keep. Disappointed, they exchange one set of political leaders for another, whose promises are no more fulfilled than the promises of those before them. They become disillusioned, bitter, and cynical; fair game for dictators and "strong men" who promise to lead them to a "promised land", but instead lead them into greater disasters and misfortunes.

All the time they are experiencing unemployment, poverty, insecurity, comp-

etition for jobs, struggles to "rise up the ladder". They seek to escape from the harsh world of reality in dreams and games of make-believe, in football pools and cinemas, but only for brief moments, for capitalism soon brings them back to things as they are, and not as they would wish them to be. They still have to contend with poverty, unemployment, insecurity, and war. For the working-class, Capitalism is a society of mental, social, and economic frustration; as such it breeds race-prejudice as a swamp breeds pestilence.

To the extent that Socialist ideas permeate the minds of the working-class, wherever they may be, to the extent that workers realise that their interests are in common, irrespective of race, and opposed to the interests of the capitalist class, irrespective of their race, to that extent they will become proof against race-prejudice and will work together for the establishment of Socialism which will end, once and for all, the problem of race-prejudice.

In the words of our Declaration of Principles: "... the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex".

From SPGB pamphlet
"The Racial Problem -
A Socialist Analysis" (1947).

Running Commentary



Strikers condemned

More than 5,500 workers were out on strike as a wave of industrial unrest spread to hitherto uninvolved plants. The week-long spate of walk-outs and go-slows affected 27 firms in five cities. A total of more than 8,700 people had stopped work since strikes started and more than 750 of them had been dismissed as a result. The dispute was over pay, a shorter working week and guaranteed pension funds. A spokesman for the employers' association said he was "gravely concerned" and the trade union congress issued a statement expressing hope that the government would "respond constructively in solving the problem".

These familiar events took place a few weeks ago, not in Britain or the industrialised West but in newly "liberated" Zimbabwe. The government's response, however, was somewhat blunter than European wage slaves are used to. (Give them time and they'll no doubt learn to refine their language.) Mugabe's spokesman pointed out that all strikes were at present illegal; that companies that had dismissed their workers were within their rights; and that strikers were liable to arrest and prosecution. Any of the black population who remained in doubt as to the nature of their recent "liberation" had the position forcefully explained to them by the new Minister of Labour, Mr Kumbirai Kangai. Freedom, he said, did not mean that a worker could do or behave as he wished. "Discipline at work must remain part and parcel of the freedom we have attained" (*The Times*, 22 March). He told the strikers that his colleagues were deeply disappointed in them, and that by behaving in such a manner they were hurting themselves and the government. The new Minister of Mines echoed his remarks: "We believe in a competitive economy . . . a lot of teaching of the people is necessary".

We, however, did not need confirmation that African nationalism is the ideology of a would-be ruling and exploiting class. It is those workers, black and white, who dreamed that the election of Mugabe's Zanu PF party would further their interests that have had an early and rude awakening. African nationalism may talk of democracy, but this is not its concern at all. The history of the continent's indepen-

dent states shows that any attempts of the working class to organise themselves have been resisted. One function of the new Zimbabwe State will be to hold down the working class in the interests of capital accumulation, to train the work force to become hard-working, obedient wage slaves. And as in all other countries, the important social division is that of class, not colour or race.

Marx and the monetarists

Some of the Chancellor's best friends are monetarists, but you'll be relieved to hear that Karl Marx isn't among them. In his budget day television broadcast, Geoffrey Howe suggested that the government's policy of restricting the "money supply" as a means of combatting inflation would have met with the approval of socialism's greatest theorist. "It is a great pity", he said, "that its (monetarism's) practical, commonsense importance has been so confused by arid, theoretical dispute", adding that "even" Marx had believed in it. The Chancellor had possibly picked up this, to him, amusing titbit from the guru of "monetarism" himself, Milton Friedman. Interviewed in the *Guardian* (1 March), Friedman declared:

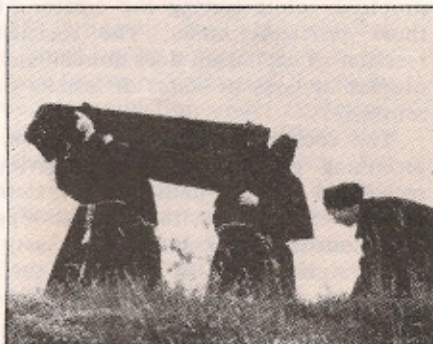
"The quantity theory of money is a scientific proposition. It is not political. Karl Marx was a monetarist, because he believed that increases in the supply of money push up prices."

Sir Geoffrey has not exactly got it right. The Marxian explanation of inflation and the views of modern monetarists differ in important respects and have been discussed in our pages many times. Over the years, the Socialist Party has been alone in pointing out that inflation is the result of governments printing too much money, but this is not synonymous with Friedmanite doctrine and should not be confused with the present government's views.

First, Marx only accepted the Quantity Theory of Money (which says, basically, that the level of prices is determined by the amount of money in circulation) as valid where inconvertible paper currency is in use; where the currency was gold (and for paper currency) this was not the case. On the contrary, said Marx, refuting the ideas of the classical authors of this theory, Hume and Ricardo, it was the level of

prices (and of economic transactions) that determined the quantity of money in circulation — and which, we might add with Marx, still determines the quantity of an inconvertible paper currency that should be issued to avoid inflation.

Second, by "money" Marx understood basic cash — notes and coin. He did not include, as most modern "monetarists" do, bank deposits in the "money supply". Third, Marx was merely concerned here with analysing and understanding how capitalism worked, not with laying down a monetary policy for capitalist governments to pursue. He must not be regarded, therefore, as an advocate of a non-inflationary currency policy.



Cheap life and death

The *News of the World* of 23 March told of an elderly widow who got into serious debt paying for her husband's funeral, even when the insurance she had taken out was added to the Government death grant. The latter was fixed at £30 in 1967, since when prices have trebled. The Labour opposition's move to increase the amount to £45 (intended, no doubt, to show their newly-found "compassion") was resisted by the Government in the person of Mrs Chalker, Under Secretary of Health and Social Security. She accepted that some people had extreme difficulty in meeting funeral costs but had "nothing but understanding for them". As if to compensate for this, a group of Tory MPs tried, unsuccessfully, to persuade the Chancellor to increase child benefit by £1.20 instead of the proposed 75p.

In the same week, five Civil Service unions issued a pamphlet criticising the proposed engagement of 1,000 extra inspectors to stop what the government considers to be £50 million in social security "fiddles", and claiming that the same number employed on income tax evasion would save ten times as much. (Since, over a 20 year period, only one business in twenty has its returns investigated, the unions may well have understated their case.) The general secretary of the Inland Revenue Staff Federation remarked: "If we could get

it all it would be enough to take 5p off the basic rate of income tax". (*Guardian*, 20 March)

Two other recent articles in the *Guardian* emphasised yet again capitalism's priorities, this time in the field of health. In one (10 April), Dr Alf Spinks, former director of research at ICI, stated that cost prevented the full testing of chemicals in daily use to see whether they could cause cancer. In the other (20 March), Dr Tony Wing of the European Dialysis and Transplant Association remarked that many of the 1,000 kidney patients who die in Britain every year could be saved if money were available to give the treatment. We also had the *Sunday Express* (6 April) reporting, on its front page, the plans of American medical firms to set up in Britain and Europe "Buy your Blood" collection points that could also involve

the purchasing of human organs for spare part surgery. The "British" blood would then be sold on what is a growing international market.

All these news items show capitalism for what it is: a system of society incapable of meeting the needs of its members; that employs cost-benefit analysis in the treatment of human suffering, as in all spheres of social life. The working class will be made the scapegoats for capitalism's problems so long as they aspire to nothing better than "5p off" instead of "3p off".

Still, there is some good news. The *Daily Telegraph* of 6 April reported the building of a factory at Old Buckenham, Norfolk, which will be producing veneered polystyrene coffins for workers at "half the price".

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POLITICAL NOTES

Stalinists in the Labour Party

Those on the left wing of the Labour party are often caricatured as well-intentioned fools with admirable morals but little sense. While this may be true of many of them, we should not forget that some Labour leaders have rather unsavoury political pasts. Here is one of them writing in the journal, *Socialist Revolt*, in April 1957:

"No one can deny that Communists in the past have made grave mistakes, but does anyone believe that Russia would have retained its socialist basis . . . without Stalin's iron rule during the most difficult period in Communist history? Would subversion, direct aggression, economic sabotage etc. not have crushed the germinating seed of world Communism if Comrade Stalin had not 'enforced' the unity of Communists in Russia, and throughout the International Communist Movement?"

The author of that hymn of praise to Stalin was Eric Heffer. Another admirer of the Stalinist system was the present leader of the Labour party, James Callaghan, who wrote in *Reynolds News* in March 1946:

"The rewards given to ability in the USSR at all levels are far greater than those given to the employed in Capitalist Britain. I have seen it and it works."

So, the next time you hear Heffer or Callaghan talking about socialism (a practice they usually reserve for Party Conferences and other such occasions), recall what it is that these men understand by the term and recognise them for the enemies of the working class that they are.

Gestapo deaths

Remember the war over markets that they said was fought to defeat the evil of German totalitarianism? Well, the Gestapo may have been defeated, but many West German workers are still concerned about the degree to which the State is interfering in their lives. According to a report in *German International* of September 1979,

"In February 1978 the former Bonn Defence Minister Georg Leber, resigned after disclosures that the Military Security Service had been involved in bugging operations without his knowledge. In May of that year library staff reported that intelligence agents had been keeping a watch on the reading habits of book borrowers — and feeding their findings into the government computers. In June last year the former Interior Minister, Werner Maihofer, resigned after the publication of reports that border guards had been keeping an eye on the reading matter carried by travellers."

The most comprehensive West German police computer is "Inpol", short for Informationssystem der Polizei. In 1972, when it became operative, it was linked to 20 data stations; now it is fed by 1,200, thus putting the West German government's capacity for spying on its workers on a par with that of East

STALIN'S death was a great blow to all who desire Socialism and . . .

Weeping in streets of Prague

Daily Worker Special Correspondent

'His inspiration lives on'

Daily Worker Reporter

His picture

I HAVE carried the Stalin banner since 1921.

Berlin workers pile memorials

th flower

In 1941 I bought a Russian photo of Joe. It still hangs on my wall. When the bombs were falling, I took a look at him. In her dressing room at the Haymarket Theatre, DAME SYBIL HORNDIKE said: "The news is a terrible sad. Russian people."

DR. DONALD SOPER, President of the Methodist Conference: "I hope the illness of Stalin will blind the Russian people together in gratitude for what he has done."



The British Communist Party's daily paper (1953) sycophantic and nauseating approval of Stalin

Germany. In Britain, jury-vetting, bugging and secret police computers are known to exist. As 1984 approaches we are forced to take the Orwellian fear more and more seriously.

Cheap Chinese labour

State capitalism, not socialism, exists in Russia and China. And because workers in these countries are not free to combine in trade unions, the rate of exploitation tends to be higher than in the more industrialised parts of the world. The *Socialist Standard* has often shown that it is more profitable for Western capitalists to invest in the cheap labour of the East than the unionised labour of the West. The *Electronic Times* of 28 February provides us with further evidence:

"To reduce production costs, Citizen Watch is planning to have electronic watches assembled in China - in the Guangdong province. The plan is for quartz watches at the Chinese plant

using Japanese movements in Chinese cases. The Chinese local government authorities at Guangdong are keen for local assembly to alleviate the shortage of watches, and to limit imports from Hong Kong. Consignments of watches have already been assembled for Hong Kong manufacturers in Guangdong, and so the authorities are keen to exploit the local knowledge."

China is part of the world capitalist market, with all of its concern for imports and exports, production costs and - the hallmark of all capitalist production - exploitation of wage labour by capital.

Profits before health

The *Electronic Times* of 6 March contains another noteworthy report. The United States National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has recently been investigating

the health hazards at a semiconductor firm called Signetics in Sunnyvale, California. The investigation followed complaints from three employees that their work was literally making them sick. Such symptoms as burning tongues, nose bleeds, chest tightness, and metallic tastes in their mouths were reported. According to the *Electronic Times*: "The three [who complained] were fired from the company in July [1979], four days before the NIOSH-contract physicians were denied entry to Signetics."

NIOSH reported that the majority of workers in the firm complained of the same symptoms as the three already sacked. Their report stated that the health hazards could have been prevented had there been improved ventilation in the workplace. But,

"This would mean additional investments in expensive ventilation and other such equipment at a time when most companies already have trouble finding capital to finance their research and development projects."

So it's profits before people once again.

SC



Remember Belgium

In 1914, hundreds of thousands of workers were duped into enlisting by the appeal to their sympathy on behalf of "poor little Belgium". It is interesting to learn that confirmation has now been given to the statement that the Allied governments had themselves prepared for violating Belgian "neutrality". Mr. Harold Nicolson has just written a life of his father, Lord Carnock who, as Sir Arthur Nicolson, was Permanent Undersecretary at the Foreign Office in the years leading up to the war. (*Lord Carnock*, published by Constable, 21/-.)

From a review of the book which appeared in the *Daily Herald* on April 3rd 1930, we learn that in September 1911 "preparations for landing four or six divisions on the Continent have been worked out to the minutest detail"; and in 1913 French military authorities are reported by Sir Arthur Nicolson to be of the view that "it would be far better for France if a conflict were not too long postponed". In 1913 Sir Arthur Nicolson wrote to the Minister in Brussels: "We and France might have to move troops across the Belgian frontier in order to meet the approach of German troops from the other side". The *Herald* reviewer says that this action was contemplated before the Germans actually entered Belgium". (From an editorial in the *Socialist Standard*, May 1930)

An Englishman's home

Imagine a village perched high in the Welsh mountains, so picturesque that it becomes a favoured spot for weekends "away from it all". More and more of its houses are bought up by people who only spend occasional weekends there, or who let the house to holidaymakers during the summer and leave it empty for the rest of the year. As the number of permanent residents drops, the village shop finds there is insufficient custom to keep going and closes down, the local telephone box is removed, and bus services may be withdrawn altogether. The village ceases to function as a community.

It is such considerations that lie behind the spate of arson attacks, now numbering over thirty, on English-owned holiday homes in Wales since December

last year. Besides helping to depopulate the countryside (a process which is taking place anyway), the demand for holiday homes increases house prices so that they are beyond the reach of many local people. The county of Gwynedd has more second homes than it has people on its council house waiting lists.

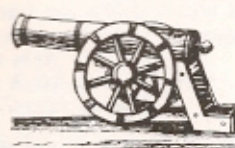
And then there are the nationalist factors also; the claim that the influx of holidaymakers and weekend residents from England dilutes the supposedly Celtic character of north and west Wales and pushes the Welsh language further into oblivion. The nationalist argument (which in truth is sometimes a purely racist one) is however misplaced. The same kind of rural depopulation and distintegration of communities is taking place in the Lake District. And it makes no odds whether the owner of the second home lives in London or in Cardiff.

The existence of normally empty second homes alongside homeless people is a graphic illustration of the contradictions of a society which breeds palaces and hovels, kings and paupers. It is capitalism which is responsible for the social and physical devastation of the countryside in Wales as elsewhere. Any solution will involve fighting the causes of the decay not just its symptoms, and so will have to be a global not a purely national one.

PB



Briefing



Youthquake

In the past few weeks several incidents of gang violence among young people have received a fair amount of adverse publicity. First there was the wrecking of a train and the attack on some of its passengers at Neasden tube station, one consequence of which is that London Transport staff are taking industrial action to press for better protection. The resultant inconvenience suffered by passengers is encouraging them to blame the weekend stoppages on "those mindless hooligans" who are threatening "law and order" as usual. Then there were the Bristol anti-police riots, provoked by a raid on the 'Black and White Cafe'. Despite the demonstration offered by these disturbances of the unity of interest of the working class (of whatever ethnic origin) in the face of harassment, they caused a great deal of suffering among the local population. Finally, over Easter weekend, there were turbulent scenes on the South Coast, as gangs of young wage-slaves celebrated their short holiday from work with a drunken spree of violence.

These are mere outbreaks, however, of a tension which ferments permanently and inevitably among working people. There will be many more similar riots for the newspapers to use to increase sales. One point that won't be made by the capitalist press, though, is that there is unlikely ever to be, among the squalid struggles of violent rival gangs, a proportionate representation of young members of the capitalist class. The conditions which induce such behaviour in some young workers do not exist for children of the rich.

Reactions to the violence ranged from indignant demands for harsh punitive measures to "liberal" offers of care and rehabilitation. In the former category lies Home Secretary William Whitelaw's "short, sharp shock", the futility of which is dealt with in the April *Socialist Standard*. The "liberal" alternative may seem less harsh, but is just as futile, since it involves gently easing the so-called culprit back into the social relationships which caused his or her behaviour in the first place. The reason for society's failure hitherto to prevent

gang violence and all other manifestations of frustration and discontent is that only effects are treated. To remove the cause of the problem would entail the abolition on a world scale of the institution of class ownership of the means of life. Thus social engineers are employed for the farcical task of patching and mopping up after the perennial disturbances occur — truly a labour of Sisyphus.

The hypocrisy of capitalism is such, however, that violent behaviour is morally condemned and publicly abhorred only when the nation is not at war. As soon as a war is declared, unlimited kudos are gained by workers prepared to inflict the most barbaric cruelties upon workers of another nation. A system of society which is



inherently violent and antagonistic, in which mass destruction is constantly recurrent in the form of war, and in which property has to be defended by intimidating, armed force, cannot be expected to produce anything other than violent behaviour on the part of its victims.

The cause of the frustration suffered by members of the working class has deeper roots than the reformers believe. At school we are prepared for lives of wage-slavery by subjection to discipline, rules, enforced working-hours and authorised punishment. The school-child soon learns to treat the hours from 4 o'clock onwards as his or her own, submitting, during the first part of each day, to such restraints as may be imposed by the authorities. When this pattern is transferred to the office, the warehouse, the workshop or the factory there is usually nothing but dull acceptance on the part of the victim. Inside the stipulated hours you belong to your employer with, once again, only

the evening "your own". Throughout every working day we are regulated, ruled and regimented for the sole purpose of creating profits. We arrive home, change our clothes (with all the satisfaction due to a symbolic rite) and try to relax. But before long we are setting alarm clocks for our next day's domination; we spend our lives, even from our school days, waiting for the bell, the end of the day, the end of the week, the end of the year. It is this grinding monotony which creates frustration and leads, in some cases, to the few hours which are "our own" being frittered away in agonised rituals of a destructive kind. It does not foster thought or social harmony, but aggression and desolation.

When the working class organise politically and consciously for the establishment of socialism, the means of production and distribution will become the common heritage of all humanity and wage labour will give way to voluntary, co-operative work, with free access for all to the goods and services produced by society. No longer will the vast majority of the population spend all of their days making profits for employers; no longer will working people be alienated from the means of production, from their creative activity and its products, from each other or from themselves.

Gangs of youths trying to relieve their week's frustrations and anxieties by getting drunk and going on a violent rampage epitomise the capitalist system, based as it is upon conflict, force and degradation. Only when social ownership has been instituted can interests be universally harmonised and sordid outbreaks of tension in the form of vandalism or gang-warfare become a thing of the past. Meanwhile, the cause of socialism can only be advanced by patient, peaceful persuasion. Those who have reached a state of positive and explicit dissatisfaction with the way things are should not give vent to their feelings with impotent, sporadic savagery, but organise democratically to establish a society geared to their material interest.

CMS

**SOCIALIST
MEETINGS
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Literary lefties in the 1930s

Although the furore over Anthony Blunt has died down the question still remains: why did people like him swallow the "Russian Myth" so easily? We might ask this especially about other members of Blunt's generation and social background who were involved not in the visual arts but in the literary world. The pro-Communist sympathies of the literary left-wing did not amount to sustained and covert acts of treason but they allowed their ideology to govern their lives and work for the best part of a decade – and this did not stop at deception and the telling of lies.

In order to explain why these writers mistook Russian Nationalism for socialism it is necessary to appreciate the peculiarities of their approach to politics on the one hand, and the common characteristics of their background and culture on the other. First, who were the protagonists in this political tragedy and what was their contribution to the history and literature of the nineteen-thirties?

At the heart of the 'thirties literary movement, which comprised writers born during the first two decades of the twentieth century, was the Auden Group which emerged from the atmosphere and tradition of Bloomsbury. The group included the poets, Stephen Spender, C. Day Lewis and Louis MacNeice, along with the novelists, Christopher Isherwood and Edward Upward who were attracted to the most promising poet of the period, Wystan Hugh Auden. Malcolm Muggeridge and

Kingsley Martin also had strong connections with a definite intellectual tradition, that of the eminent Fabians. Muggeridge by virtue of his marriage to Beatrice Webb's niece, Kitty, and Martin through his position as Editor of the "Staggers and Naggers" – *The New Statesman and Nation*. Theoreticians such as the Labour politician John Strachey and the bright young Communist Christopher Caudwell contributed to the ideological justification of Communist politics in Britain; the former in his *The Coming Struggle for Power* and other theoretical works published by the Left Book Club of which he was a leading light, and the latter in *Illusion and Reality*, which attempted to apply Historical Materialism to the evolution of poetry. Claud Cockburn and the Hungarian journalist Arthur Koestler were hard-headed Communists who, under the orders of their Russian masters, sent fabricated news-stories to England during the Spanish Civil War. Indeed, Cockburn wrote under the slightly more proletarian name of Frank Pitcairn, while Koestler kept his membership of the Communist Party a complete secret while working as a reporter for the right-wing Hungarian paper *Pester Lloyd*. The two heretics of the literary left-wing were Julian Symonds who became a Trotskyite during the 'thirties, and George Orwell who viewed Stalin and Trotsky in the same critical light and described Russian Commissars as "half gangster, half gramophone".

The key to their left-wing sympathies



Fellow travellers: Auden, Isherwood, Spender – posing

can be detected in the official statistics of the period. It was a decade in which unemployment peaked at nearly three million in 1933; the Ministry of Agriculture revealed that 20 per cent of the nation's children were badly fed and Seebohm Rowntree claimed that 30 per cent of the city of York were living below the poverty line. The social conditions of the 'thirties are more poignantly illustrated in the following three extracts. Greenwood's piece from *Love On The Dole* was written by someone who was brought up in the conditions described; Orwell was fortunate enough to be a mere visitor to the industrial North; Day Lewis' poem could easily have been constructed by someone who had only read about such things in the press.

"... and to find the cost of this present system you only have to look at our own lives and the lives of our parents and their parents. Labour never ending, constant struggles to pay the rent and to buy sufficient food and clothing. And the houses in which we are compelled to live are as though they have been designed by fiends in hell for our especial punishment. Even at best I say it is not a life."

Love On The Dole
by Walter Greenwood

"She looked up as the train passed and I was almost near enough to catch her eye. She had a round pale



face, the usual exhausted face of the slum girl who is twenty-five and looks forty, thanks to miscarriages and drudgery; and it wore, for the second in which I saw it, the most desolate hopeless expression I have ever seen."

The Road to Wigan Pier
by George Orwell

"The hooters are blowing,
No need let him take;
When baby is hungry
'Tis best not to wake.
Thy mother is crying,
Thy dad's on the dole;
Two shillings a week is
The price of a soul."

A Carol by C. Day Lewis

The nineteen-thirties was the decade of social surveys and "Urban Rides" undertaken by a variety of writers, political activists and social scientists including Orwell, Rowntree, Wal Hanington, J. B. Priestley and Arnold Zweig, to name a few.

Running throughout the work of the literary left-wing — almost without exception — is a pervading sense of guilt which has three elements. The dominant of the three was the over-riding belief that they, born into the homes of small businessmen, shopkeepers and civil servants, educated at public school and in most cases Oxbridge, were, to use Upward's phrase, "Living off the backs of the workers". Somehow they were responsible for the worst features of the capitalist system. It was almost as if one particular phrase of Lenin's was taken to heart above all others.

"How could they be so blind as not to see that our enemy is the small capitalist, the small owner? In the transition period from Capitalism to Socialism our chief enemy is the small bourgeoisie, with its economic customs, habits and position."

The Chief Tasks of Our Times



Spender (1938)—wet and without a clue!

Lenin, of course, was referring to Russia in an attempt to direct attention away from the bigger and more powerful capitalist institution — the State. Here is an example of a political expedient in one country becoming a precept of political theology in another. This aspect of Communist propaganda implanted itself on the already guilt-stricken consciences of the literary intellectuals. For they had already inherited from their school days a sense of shame that they had been too young to test their manhood in the Great War. In addition their childhoods had been scarred by sexual and emotional trauma.

Edward Upward described Repton School — unaffectionately referred to as "Reptile" — as being rotten with "a foul and vicious kind of sexuality" during his time there as a pupil. Orwell recounts the mental and physical cruelty of his Eastbourne prep school in *Such, Such Were The Joys*. Spender says that his parents might just as well have had him "educated at a brothel for flagellants" and Isherwood claims that his "middle class" upbringing denied affection and taught that sex was "the loathsome charnel house, the bottomless abyss and its natural outcome was paralysis". The political implication of these experiences is succinctly expressed by W. H. Auden:

"The best reason I have for opposing Fascism is that at school I lived in a Fascist State."

The lure of Russia, the call of the Popular Front and the fight against Fascism took on a new and personal perspective. The literary left-wing chose a number of ways to try to expiate their class-guilt (for example Orwell became a tramp), but most chose to join the Communist Party or become fellow travellers. This was far from an easy defection as they all experienced particular inhibitions in their dealings with the "working class". Muggeridge compares the fascination of the intellectuals with the workers to a small dog passing a big dog, half wanting to smell its bottom, and half afraid. It is worth commenting that their political needs were largely emotional rather than intellectual. They felt guilt but they did not "feel" Communism. It was an uncomfortable veneer which did not fit easily, and it required a great deal of their mental effort to convince them that it did. The contradictions inherent in Russian Communism were mentally accommodated but without realising that the paradoxes originated with Lenin not Marx. Therefore when they finally cast off the ill-fitting Communist mantle it was "human nature" that got the credit for the failure of this political exercise, and Marx who got the blame. This convenient conclusion is presented in Martin's autobiography under the heading of "Left Illusions" and in the

infamous compilation by ex-Communists, *The God That Failed*. However, their excuses are not historically accurate.

The anti-Marxist foundations of Bolshevism have been highlighted in some detail by revolutionaries like Rosa Luxemburg and more recently by academics like Maximilian Rubel,¹ Frederick Bender,² and Paul Mattick.³ Even Raymond Williams in *Culture and Society* and Robert Conquest in *The Great Terror* have referred to the expedient innovations of Leninism. Yet it is precisely the flawed assumptions of the Bolsheviks which ensured the political betrayal and eventual disenchantment of individuals who could not stomach the rigours of power politics.



The Spanish Civil War (1936-9)

Lenin differed fundamentally from Marx, in his insistence that socialism could be established in a pre-industrial economy and that a socialist revolution could be initiated without the participation of the working class as a whole. These modifications required the re-defining of socialism and the economic criteria of class so as to fit in with the economic conditions of Russia. It was this last alteration which enabled the Russian Communists to successfully dupe the literary intellectuals.

In the *Communist Manifesto* Marx declared:

"By bourgeoisie is meant the class of modern Capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage-labour. By proletariat the class of modern wage-labourers who having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labour-power to live."

1. Pipes (Ed) *Revolutionary Russia*. 1968.
2. Bender F.L. *The Betrayal Of Marx*. 1975.
3. Mattick P. *Marx And Keynes*. 1974.

If they had read Marx the literary Left-Wing would have realised that they too were workers by virtue of their occupations as journalists and teachers. Their bourgeois "customs and habits" were not sufficient in themselves to constitute membership of the capitalist class. Like all other workers they stood as "non-owners" in relation to the social means of production.

Lenin insisted that the working class consisted only of industrial labour, a mere section of all wage-earners, and the party that represented their true interests did not consist of "the working class itself" but a minority of professional revolutionaries – Lenin's Vanguard of the Proletariat. Lenin's contrived view of class gave rise to further inaccuracy and confusion in the writing of the literary left. In the work of the most promising young neo-Bolshevik, Christopher Caudwell, this revised view of class is taken to its most illogical extreme.

"All classes injured by the final explosion of capitalism – workers,

peasants, small farmers, shopkeepers, artisans, artists, specialists, technicians – compose that rebellious mass . . . but only one class is organised by its conditions of life to overthrow the old system and build a new."

Illusion and Reality

The literary left-wing believed for a time that capitalism would finally collapse and that their own involvement was of little importance in the face of the inevitable, but at least they were on the side of history.

It is ironic that contained in the speech that was to shape the political commitment of a whole generation of young artists was the admission that should have exposed Lenin's opportunism for what it was – not the way to socialism, but a road to disenchantment and despair.

"State capitalism would be a step forward for us."

The Chief Tasks of Our Times

Richard Hales

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The end of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat!

As everyone knows, there has been a Shakespeare industry for centuries. Thousands of academics—some wise, some foolish, some honest, some crooked—have made a nice living out of it. But it took a long time for a similar industry to develop about Marx; for most of the century since he died, the groves of academe in the main held a conspiracy of silence. He wasn't worth mentioning to students—who in turn became professors who were able to pass on their own ignorance to succeeding generations. Suddenly, in the last decade or two, all that has changed. The reasons need not bother us, but it's enough to make an SPGB cat laugh to find that there is now a flourishing Marx industry among circles which not so long ago "professed": "Marx? Never heard of 'im!"

Every facet of the sage's life and works is explored and there is no end to the discoveries about the subsequent career of his third cousin twice removed; or about the bastard whom he fathered on the domestic servant and who was looked after by the undoubtedly kindly Engels. It is true that all these scribblers seem to know everything except the one thing that Marx really spent his life on: socialism. Ask ten professors of politics to tell you what socialism is and you will get ten different answers, each one as stupid as the rest. A few months ago, for example, there was an attack on Marxism in the *Observer* by no less a personage than the editor-in-chief. Predictably, this brought an article the following week by E. P. Thompson (who is too big for the paper to ignore) who had no difficulty in showing that Conor Cruise O'Brien is an ignoramus. Sadly he also showed that he too has his faults. The author of *The Making of the English Working Class*, which received the high praise that was its due when reviewed in this journal some years ago, can still think that a Marxist can possibly associate with the reformists in the Labour Party or the SWP.

As is the nature of an industry, those who engage in it are always looking for products that the competition has not dealt with. So we find that the literati take their magnifying glasses to pore over every odd phrase that Marx wrote from his youth up (and like ordinary mortals, Marx too had to grow up—and learn. So we get learned tomes discussing what exactly the great man meant in Chapter XYZ, line 123 of the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* or some such.

The matter of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is even more ridiculous. The phrase was not intended for, and not used in, one of his books or major pamphlets but was merely a remark used en passant in the course of correspondence. This however has not prevented the phrase being analysed and dissected ad nauseam. Can there be a dictatorship of the great majority?



Lenin the almighty Jehovah (1932)

Whom would they dictate over in the classless society of socialism? Did Marx really mean "dictatorship" in the sense in which we understand the term or was he using it in the manner in which it was understood in ancient Rome? One can only assume that in his grave in Highgate, Marx is saddened to think that a careless phrase, one that indeed seems rather less than meaningful to us, should occasion so much pother to generations then unborn.

Unfortunately, it is not only foolish academics who seize on such phrases. People like Lenin (who had at any rate studied Marx) and Stalin (who had no time to read, being too busy butchering the Russian proletariat) needed these obscure phrases to lend authority to their tyrannical capitalist regimes. Lenin and his so-called Communist Party made it quite clear that they thought it perfectly correct to run a dictatorship and call it democracy. This, they said, was what Marx meant by the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. And this in turn meant that Lenin and his grislier succes-

sors could claim to be Marxists when by every reasonable understanding of what Marx spent his life writing about, and fighting for, they were anti-Marxists who were running a dictatorship over the proletariat—like Hitler. (In a sense, even worse. Hitler could at any rate say that millions of proletarians had voted him into power in an election in 1933; something that has never happened in the entire history of the Union of Capitalist Soviet Republics.)

However, the mask has now been taken off, very quietly. Russia, which always claimed to be the supreme example of whatever Marx is supposed to have meant by the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, has now abandoned that claim. At last, the official news from Moscow, from no less authoritative a source than the *Sovietskaya Vooruzhennyye Sily* (p. 409). Most readers will no doubt be fully familiar with this journal but, for those who are not, it is the official publication of the Institute of Military History of the Soviet Ministry of Defence—and you can't get more official than that. Here is the passage in question: "Great changes have occurred in the Soviet political system. Our socialist state, which emerged as a dictatorship of the proletariat, has become an all-embracing national state expressing the interests and the will of the entire nation. As a result of this, the Soviet Armed Forces have become the weapon of our all-embracing state, a reliable defender of all classes and strata of Soviet society. Their social and class base has been widened. The union of the armed forces and the nation has been cemented even further".

There we have it. After 60 inglorious years, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is now pronounced dead. Out of the ashes we now have a socialist, classless society? On the contrary, our glorious armed forces are there to protect "all classes and strata of society". Russia even has strata as well as classes, unlike our own capitalist state. It will not be necessary to point out all the significance of the remarkable passage quoted but it is worth mentioning that the date-line of the issue is Moscow 1978. Did the glorious Soviet people have some sort of referendum in which they joyously voted out of existence the glorious Dictatorship of the Proletariat, which they had joyously upheld in all those free elections ever since Lenin smashed up the Constituent Assembly in January 1918? If so, this great event went unreported. The *Morning Star* still knows nothing about it, which is remarkable ignorance even by their standards. It is probable that about 250 million Russian members of the working class who are unlikely to read *Sovietskaya Vooruzhennyye Sily*, haven't noticed the change either.

L E WEIDBERG

IMPORTANT DOCUMENT IN SOCIALIST HISTORY

Karl Marx's Declaration of Principles

A hundred years ago this month four men met in the study of Marx's house in North London: Marx himself, Engels, Paul Lafargue (who was then still living in London) and Jules Guesde, who had come over specially from France.

Guesde (pronounced "Ged") had played a key role in persuading a conference of French political and trade union organisations in Marseilles in October 1879 to adopt "the collective ownership of the soil, sub-soil, instruments of production, raw materials" as the aim of "the Federation of the Party of Socialist Workers in France". He was now in London to get Marx's help in drawing up a declaration of principles for this new party.

Marx dictated to Lafargue, who acted as secretary of the meeting, the following preamble to a list of immediate demands which had been prepared by Guesde for the elections of 1881. We have translated it ourselves from the version which was published on the front page of *L'Egalite* of 30 June 1880 under the heading "Electoral Programme of the Socialist Workers":

Considering,

That the emancipation of the productive class is that of all human beings without distinction of sex or race;

That the producers can be free only insofar as they are in possession of the means of production;

That there are only two forms under which the means of production can belong to them:

1. The individual form which has never existed generally and which is being more and more eliminated by the progress of industry;

2. The collective form whose material and intellectual elements are being formed by the very development of capitalist society;

Considering,

That this collective appropriation can only be the outcome of the revolutionary action of the productive class — or proletariat — organised in a separate political party;

That such organisation must be pursued by all the means which the proletariat has at its disposal, including universal suffrage, thus transformed from the instrument of trickery which it has been up till now into an instrument of emancipation; The French socialist workers, in setting as the aim of their efforts in the economic field the return to the collectivity of all the means of pro-

duction, have decided, as a means of organisation and struggle, to enter the elections with the following minimum programme.¹

Guesde's election programme which followed was a list of reforms such as full freedom of the press, assembly and organisation; separation of the Church and State; an eight-hour working day; a legal minimum wage and workmen's compensation. Marx was not involved in drawing up this programme and was in fact critical of certain parts of it, especially the demand for a legal minimum wage, though he did not contest the desirability of the party adding such a programme of reforms to its socialist objective (one of the points on which we say he was in error).

It is quite clear that this excellent statement of basic socialist principles drawn up by Marx must have been one of the documents before those who drafted our Object and Declaration of Principles in 1904. Its first clause is incorporated, almost word for word, in our Clause 4 and the phrase "instrument

1. An English translation also appears in *The First International and After*, in the Pelican Marx Library, but contains a mistake, probably because it was re-translated from the German and not directly from the French. Instead of "That such organisation must be . . ." it has "That this collective appropriation must be . . ."

of emancipation" appears in our Clause 6 as "agent of emancipation". According to Bracke, who was a close collaborator of Guesde before the first World War, the words "thus transformed from the instrument of trickery which it has been up till now into an instrument of emancipation" were suggested by Guesde (see his foreword to *Programmes Socialistes de Gotha, Erfurt, Le Havre*, Spartacus, Paris, 1947). Presumably his source for saying this would have been Guesde (who died in 1922), though Guesde himself is not on record as making this claim. But in any event, whoever suggested the phrase, it was accepted and endorsed by Marx and became part of the terminology of Marxian socialism inherited by the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

All the currently available French versions of this preamble differ from the version published in *L'Egalite* (and various other French journals) in June 1880. One of these differences is important and has long been a source of embarrassment to us: the inclusion after "means of production" in the second clause of "(land, factories, ships, banks, credit, etc)". The Pelican translation does not contain this but Aaron Noland, in his *The Founding of the French Socialist Party* (p.7), quotes this phrase as if it had been in the draft dictated by Marx.

Now, if Marx really had included this phrase, it would have detracted from the value of the document as a very good statement of socialist principles as well as calling into question his own theoretical consistency. For how can there be common ownership of "banks" and "credit" when, as buying and selling institutions, these are features only of a society where private property exists? When there is common



The lesson of the Paris Commune (1871) was the crucial issue effecting socialist thought in 1880

ownership of the means of production there will be no money, no buying and selling and hence no banks or other financial institutions, as Marx made quite clear in other of his writings.² Besides, banks and other financial institutions are not "means of production" and Marx was always careful about the definition of economic terms.

There were thus two *prima facie* reasons for doubting that Marx had had a hand in including this phrase. Having looked up the issue of *L'Egalite* of 30 June 1880 we are now in a position to confirm that it was not inserted by Marx, since the phrase is nowhere to be found in the version published there. All the current French versions are therefore wrong, their publishers not having taken the elementary step of going back to the original source. We can only speculate why, but an important factor must have been that, being either Social Democrats or "Communists", they saw no contradiction in Marx seeming to suggest that banks and credit would continue to exist in socialism.

Where, then, did this addition come from and who inserted it? In July 1880 the preamble and election programme were adopted by the Centre region (which included Paris) of the French party. The version they adopted, as published in *L'Egalite* of 28 July, does not contain this phrase nor, more importantly, does the version adopted by the party as a whole at its national congress held in Le Havre in November (*Le Proletaire* No. 114, 4 December 1880).

The offending phrase first appears, together with a couple of other changes, in a version adopted at a Congress held in Roanne in September and October 1882 (see *L'Egalite*, 8 October 1882). The mystery is now near to solution, since this was the congress at which Guesde and his supporters, who had been outvoted on the issue of maintaining a single national election programme, broke away from the Federation of the Party of Socialist Workers and set up the Parti Ouvrier Francais (French Workers' Party).

Because of its unwieldy name the Federation had been known popularly as the "parti ouvrier" but this was not its official title. It is thus inaccurate to describe, as has become customary, this document as the preamble or introduction to the programme of "the French Workers' Party". Marx did not draft it for this party since it did not exist as such in 1880 but for its predecessor, the Federation of the Party of

Socialist Workers in France, to give it its full title. Naturally, as tends to happen when there are splits, the two organisations resulting from the 1882 split both claimed to be the inheritors of the original party and traced their origin back to it. In addition, Guesde, Lafargue and the others in the POF hoped to derive prestige from the fact that their declaration of principles had been drafted by Marx.

And in fact, from 1882 onwards, the POF was the recognised "Marxist" organisation in France and, like the Social Democratic Federation in Britain (formed about the same time), did carry out some useful work in introducing and spreading socialist ideas in France before finally getting bogged down in reformism. Consider, for instance, the following passage by Guesde, written in 1879, in an article "The Social Problem and its Solution" which was translated into English and published in the *Socialist Standard* in January and February 1905:

Commercial production of exchange values with an end to realising profit will disappear, and be replaced by the co-operative production of use values for consumption with a view to satisfying social wants.

Alteration to Marx's draft

In view of this recognition that there would be no buying and selling in socialism, it is strange that Guesde and Lafargue should have taken it upon themselves to "complete" Marx's draft in such a way as to suggest that banks and credit would exist in socialism. In doing so, they distorted Marx's meaning and blurred the distinction between state capitalism and socialism, the beginning of a process which led to the Social Democratic parties of Europe, in which Marx and particularly Engels had placed such hopes, coming to work in practice for state capitalism rather than socialism.

Guesde and Lafargue had no right to change Marx's draft and then claim that it had been dictated by him in the changed form in which they propagated it. A mark of their success — and damage — here is the fact that most people in France who are aware of the document think that Marx accepted the contradiction in the POF version, that is the "common ownership of banks". It would be nice if Marx's famous remark "One thing is certain, I'm not a Marxist" (Engels' letter to Bernstein, 3 November 1882) had been occasioned by this change to his 1880 draft, but there is no evidence at all for this conclusion! It was, however, made in connection with the Guesdists.

We shouldn't be too hard on the Guesdists though, since they had some influence on the early thinking of the SPGB. Marx's preamble, for instance, would only have been known to our founder members in the form of the "considerants" to the programme of the Guesdist Party. The POF, after becoming "the Socialist Party of France" in 1901, joined the united Social Democratic party in France set up in 1905 under the auspices of the Second International. The Guesdists continued to exist as a group with their own publication *Le Socialisme*. The early *Socialist Standards* contain a number of articles translated from this journal. For instance, an article by Guesde on "Legality and Revolution" (February 1908), one by Lafargue on "The Law of Value and the Dearthness of Commodities" (May 1908), two articles by Charles Rappoport, author of a number of books and later a leading theorist of the French "Communist" Party (September 1908 and April 1911) and a short, and not very consequential, article by the Bracke we have already mentioned (January 1910). There were others too. In addition, our traditional definition of the State as "the public power of coercion" comes from the early Guesdist (later an open reformist and top French diplomat) Gabriel Deville.

So, when our supporters in France are numerous enough, the declaration of principles of the party they will form will not be something totally alien to the French working class political tradition, but will include passages originally drafted by Marx for a French workers' organisation.

ALB

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2. "As soon as the means of production cease being transformed into capital (which also includes the abolition of private property in land), credit as such no longer has any meaning" (*Capital*, Vol III, Moscow, p.594).

THE FRENCH MOVEMENT FOR ABUNDANCE

A way out of the mess?

In the February Socialist Standard we published an article — The French Movement for Abundance — which critically examined the ideas of an organisation called the Mouvement Français pour l'Abondance. In this issue of our journal, which deals in some detail with socialism and how and why it will be established, we think it is of interest to publish an article which looks at another organisation in France which has some interesting ideas.

Editorial Committee

Socialism means different things to different people. To some it means social reforms, to others state ownership of industry, to others the kind of one-party state that exists in Russia or China. Very few people however view

socialism in the same way as the Socialist Party of Great Britain, that is as a worldwide society without buying and selling in which production takes place not for profit but solely to satisfy human needs. Since its formation in 1904 the SPGB has defined socialism in this way and so it is always refreshing, in a world overwhelmingly hostile to our ideas, to meet with individuals or organisations whose view of socialism bears some similarity to our own.

One such example is to be found in a recently published book in French by Maurice Laudrain¹ illustrating the ideas of an organisation called the *Centre de Prospective Socialiste*. In the book Laudrain points out that all the so-called "Socialists" and "Communists" at present vying for power in France are bent, not on doing away with capitalism, but on administering it. For Laudrain capitalism means the whole economic system of buying and selling which keeps a small minority extremely rich and powerful and the vast majority, all those who depend on a wage or salary, relatively poor, problem-ridden and powerless. This system, he argues, has as its lynch-pin "profitability" which "sacrifices on its altar the interest of peoples" (p.53), brings insoluble problems such as unemployment and corruption, and prevents the realisation of the abundance of goods and services which modern technology is capable of producing. "The way out of the mess", according to the author, is through the abolition, by democratic means (by people consciously voting for it) of the present "exchange economy" and the introduction of what one of his mentors, Jacques Duboin, termed a "distributive economy of abundance" (p.144). Therefore those few already conscious of the need for such a change "must make an immense effort to spread their ideas and educate people to accept them" (p.169).

So far so good. A sound analysis which could easily tempt us to see a companion socialist organisation growing up in France. But unfortunately a close reading of the book yields some crucial snags which would make any association between the SPGB and the *Centre de Prospective Socialiste* quite impossible.

First and foremost the kind of society advocated by Laudrain is to be

established not on a world-wide scale but in France alone, in the hope that later other countries will follow its lead. To the question: 'How could a single isolated country have the resources to satisfy the needs of all its population and how, anyway, could it possibly stand up to a hostile capitalist world around it?', the author's reply is that "we must look for support to the only anti-capitalist forces" (Russia and China) (p.180). Here we meet the long perpetuated myth of state capitalist countries like Russia and China having something to do with socialism. This is all the more surprising, as the author has correctly described capitalism as an "exchange economy". How he can therefore see the exchange economies of Russia and China as anything other than capitalist is quite perplexing. One wonders too how he can fail to see the capitalist nature of these countries in their engagement in the same kind of military rivalry for world markets, trade routes and raw materials as carried on by the avowedly capitalist countries of the West.

In fact Laudrain hopes that a "Socialist France" would continue to do business with the capitalist countries around it — business based on exchanges of goods rather than of currency, in the same way as the countries he styles "anti-capitalist" trade with the capitalist West.

However the economic model he visualises for his new France is not that which operates in those "anti-capitalist" countries. What he favours (and this is not surprising for someone who wants to do away with buying and selling) is the abolition of money and the wages system. But (and here is the rub) his alternative is not free access to all goods and services according to the dictum: 'from each according to his ability to each according to his need', but a "new" system of non-circulating labour vouchers whereby people would have access to goods according to the number of hours' work they put in.

Now this idea is nothing new. As the writer himself points out, it goes back to Marx's conception of how socialism would work in its earlier stages until the techniques of production had been built up sufficiently to meet people's needs without rationing. Now, over a hundred years later, advanced technology has created such a potential for abundance that society, once the majority of its members want it, can pass immediately from the wages system to complete free access without any intermediate stage of rationing.

That this immediate creation of abundance could not take place in a single country is self-evident and is what has led Laudrain to propose labour tokens as a means of distributing the necessarily limited wealth of

COMPANION PARTIES

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA

P.O. Box 1440, MELBOURNE, Victoria
P.O. Box 2291, SYDNEY, N.S.W.
P.O. Box 1357, BRISBANE, Queensland

AUSTRIA: BUND DEMOKRATISCHER SOZIALISTEN

Gussriegelstrasse 50, A-100, VIENNA
Journal: INTERNATIONALES FREIES WORT

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

P.O. Box 4280 Station 'A'
VICTORIA, B.C. V8X 3X8
Journal: FULCRUM

PARTI SOCIALISTE DU CANADA

C.P. 244, Pointe-aux-Trembles,
Québec H1B 5K3

Journal: SOCIALISME MONDIAL

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND

147 Gilnakirk Rd, Belfast 5

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND

P.O. Box 1929, AUCKLAND, N.I.
P.O. Box 324, Postal Centre, Wellington
Journal: SOCIALIST VIEWPOINT

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES

295 Huntingdon Ave., Room 212
BOSTON, Mass., 02115

Journal: THE WESTERN SOCIALIST

Journals obtainable from Companion Parties or 52 Clapham High St., London S.W.4.

1. *Sortir de la pagaille (The Way out of the Mess)*, Paris, Les Publications Universitaires, 1979.

one country (France) among its population.

Both labour vouchers and the detailed (24 page) blueprint drawn up by the *Centre de Prospective Socialiste* for the management of the new French society are quite unnecessary anyway. The similarity of conditions and problems which capitalism has imposed on the whole advanced industrial world and the speed of modern communications mean that once socialist ideas have become so widespread as to be irresistible in a country like France, that same process will have operated in Britain, USA, Germany, Italy, Russia . . . And

once socialism is democratically established as a world system, it will be up to the majority who have established it to decide *then*, democratically, on the precise details of its structure and day-to-day management.

If Maurice Laudrain and the *Centre de Prospective Socialiste* sincerely aim at a revolutionary change to a society organised on the basis of human need instead of profit, we would invite them to look closely both at our criticism of their views and at the case we put forward for the establishment of such a society.

HKM

Letters



Christianity, again!

To the Editors

The article 'Christianity Confidence Trick' (March *Socialist Standard*) is an ignorant parody of Christianity. I am a Christian and a socialist. I am also a member of the 'Christian Socialists', who are proud to include in their number Donald Soper, who has endured years of opposition to his socialist views in his church, and some support. Similarly, a host of priests like Camillo Torres have led the opposition to repressive governments. It is so easy for the *Socialist Standard* to flaunt its white sheet, while remaining comparatively aloof from the dirty world of political life.

I don't believe in the literal truth of myths like the Virgin birth, or of the gross parody of Genesis presented in 'Confidence Trick'. Has the *Standard* never heard of poetic truth? I suggest that the author of the article does some research into the involvement of chapels

in the fight for better conditions of work, and the continuing fight to ensure that men, of no matter what colour or nationality they may be, are treated with the dignity and respect that is their due, as brothers in Christ.

David Fraser, BA
Newton, Rugby

REPLY

David Fraser searches desperately for some way of linking his Christian superstition with a commitment to Socialism. Donald Soper (who was given a peerage as a reward for his efforts in the service of distorting socialist ideas) is cited as a 'Christian Socialist', and so is Camillo Torres. All that these Christians have done is to have adapted their religious twaddle to fit in with the popular liberal sentiments of their day. Religious leaders have usually been forced to re-interpret their dogmas as conditions have changed, but Christianity has only been accepted by the establishment because it serves to defend the *status quo*, even if some Christians might favour a reform or two. If Lord Soper is a socialist why is he a member of the Labour Party, which has always been committed to the continuation of the capitalist system?

Mr. Fraser does not believe that 'myths like the virgin birth' are literally true, but that they have something to do with 'poetic truth'. If he means by this that they are stories which are symbolic of some deeper meaning he ought to tell us what the deeper meaning is (and how he knows what it is) — and while he's about it he had better inform the millions of gullible people who have been taught by churches, schools and missionaries that the Bible contains the words of unquestionable truth. We note that Mr. Fraser has failed to dispute the three criticisms of Christianity which were contained in the article, 'Confidence Trick': that there is no such thing as human nature; that supernatural forces (gods) should not be believed in; that the legendary character of Jesus Christ was an unattractive one.

Capitalism kills

Workers continue to support a system of society that kills deliberately and efficiently, not only in wars, but also by hypothermia in the aged or malnutrition and outright starvation. Capitalism is responsible for so many of the illnesses common to-day, either directly as their cause or because funds are refused for research into their origins and possible cure.

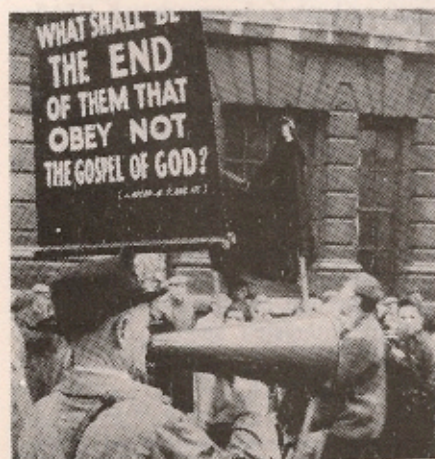
Harry Smith was a salesman, married with a nine year old son, when he died of a coronary at the age of 41. That was in 1951. Recently his son Howard died at the age of 36, leaving a young wife and two children. On the advice of his doctors he had lived carefully; but he did not even attain his father's age. Medical research had hardly progressed in the intervening 28 years.

Tragedies such as those of the Smith family are part and parcel of capitalism. How long will we allow this inhumanity to continue? The choice is ours — capitalism, coronary and cancer on top of all the other evils workers suffer under the system, or the establishment of socialism — a world where all will live in harmony, producing only for use and not for profit.

Such a society will eliminate the stresses and strains which are responsible for many of today's illnesses, and all the resources necessary for research into and the cure of such illnesses as may still exist will be readily available. Doctors and scientists will no longer be hampered by "cut backs" and the lack of research facilities and everyone will avail themselves of necessary treatment when they need it — not, as so often happens today, months or even years later — sometimes too late to be of help.

These things are readily available now — if you can pay for them! Eric Morecambe and Peter Sellers did not have to wait for their operations. Tennis pro, Arthur Ashe recently had the arteries to his heart replaced and hopes to resume his career in the near future. The only difference between Howard Smith and these people is that they are wealthy and he was not. With enough money he too could have had the best medical care and advice and might be alive today. Are we prepared to put Howard Smith's children at risk too? How many more lives must needlessly be lost under capitalism before we, the workers, the vast majority who suffer under the system, decide to get rid of it and introduce a sane society — socialism?

G W FEATHERSTON



MEETINGS AND NOTICES

BIRMINGHAM

Saturday 3 May 3.00
DEBATE: WHICH WAY SOCIALISM?
 SPGB (B. McNeeney) v.
 International Communist Current
 Dr. Johnson House, Bull Street

Thursday 22 May 7.30
MARXISM AND THE SPGB
 Speaker: H. Young
 (venue as above)

BRISTOL

Wednesday 21 May 8.00
 Planning Meeting
 Malt and Hops Pub
 Broad Street

GLASGOW

Sunday 4 May 7.30
**WORLD CRISIS OR
 WORLD SOCIALISM**
 Speakers:
 R. Donnelly & V. Vanni
 North British Hotel
 George Square

Wednesday 14 May 7.30
CRISIS, CUTS AND CHAOS
 (speaker to be announced)
 McLellan Galleries
 Sauchiehall Street

GUILDFORD

Friday 9 May 8.00
IS MARXISM IRRELEVANT?
 Speaker: A. Waters
 Friends Meeting House
 North Street

LONDON

Wednesday 14 May 7.30
CRISIS, CUTS AND CHAOS
 Speakers: E. Hardy & A. Waters
 52 Clapham High Street SW4

HARINGEY

Thursday 8 May 8.00
**WOMEN'S LIBERATION
 AND SOCIALISM**
 Speaker: A. Waters
 West Green Library
 Vincent Road N15
 (nr. Turnpike Lane tube)

ISLINGTON

Monday 5 May 8.00
**THE WAY WE LIVE AND
 THE WAY WE COULD LIVE**
 Speakers: L. Cox & C. Skelton
 Hemingford Arms
 158 Hemingford Road N1
 (nr. Highbury & Islington tube)

HARROW

Friday 23 May 8.00
**THE THREAT OF WAR: WHY
 SOCIALISTS WILL REFUSE
 TO FIGHT**
 Speaker: S. Coleman
 Dixon Hall
 Wealdstone Brotherhood Centre
 Masons Avenue (opposite Harrow
 Wealdstone station)
*Members and sympathisers who are
 interested in forming a group in the
 Harrow area are urged to attend.*

SOUTH WEST LONDON

Monday 19 May 8.00
**THE ECONOMICS OF
 CAPITALISM**
 Speaker: E. Hardy
 52 Clapham High Street SW4

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

Monday 19 May 1.00
**WHY SOCIALISTS OPPOSE
 THE LABOUR PARTY**
 Speaker: C. May
 Conference Room, Collegiate Theatre

SHEFFIELD

Saturday 3 May 1.00
WHAT IS SOCIALISM?
 Speaker: R. Cook
 Sheffield Polytechnic

NORTH WEST LONDON

Thursday 29 May 8.00
THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION?
 Speaker: E. Grant
 Abbey Community Centre
 Belsize Road NW6
 (corner of Abbey Road)

Thursday 19 June

TRADE UNIONS AND SOCIALISM
 A rally to launch our new trade union
 pamphlet.
 Abbey Community Centre

PADDINGTON

The Princess Royal
 47 Hereford Road W2
 (off Westbourne Grove)

Thursday 15 May 8.45

**TUC'S DAY OF ACTION—
 ARE TRADE UNIONS NECESSARY?**
 Speaker: L. Cox

Thursday 19 June 8.45

**KARL MARX
 OR MILTON FRIEDMAN**
 Speaker: H. Young

WEDNESDAY 14 MAY

The TUC's 'Day of Action' on 14 May will include a demonstration in Hyde Park. Party members and sympathisers are urged to attend to distribute leaflets and sell literature, including our new trade union pamphlet.

ISLINGTON BRANCH EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Every Sunday at 8.00
 Latin American Bookshop
 29 Islington Park Street
 (off Upper Street)

4 May

THE STUDY OF PRE-HISTORY
 Speaker: H. Walters

11 May

**THE POLITICAL ORGANISATION
 OF THE WORKING CLASS,
 1848-1904**
 Speaker: S. Coleman

18 May

MARXIAN ECONOMICS
 Speaker: E. Hardy

25 May

THE STUDY OF PRE-HISTORY
 Speaker: H. Walters

OUTDOOR MEETINGS

BRISTOL

DURDHAN DOWNS
 Sunday 4 & 18 May 3.00

GLASGOW

Sunday 4 May 2.00-5.00
MAY DAY RALLY
 Custom House Quay

LONDON

HYDE PARK
 Monday 5 May 10.00-1.00
MAY DAY RALLY
 (Meetings also held at Speakers Corner
 every Sunday 10.00-6.00)

EARLS COURT

(opposite station)
 Thursdays, 1, 15 & 29 May 8.00

ISLINGTON

Monday 5 May 2.00-6.00
MAY DAY RALLY
 Highbury Fields

NEW BRANCH

A branch has now been formed in N.W. London. Sympathisers and any Central Branch members in the area who are interested and can help in the propaganda programme, please contact the Branch Secretary.

Central Organiser

DIRECTORY

Branches

BOLTON. Tuesdays 8.30. The Founders Arms, St. Georges Street. Corres. Stephen Finch, 3 Hinkler Avenue, Great Lever, Bolton.

CAMDEN (BLOOMSBURY). 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 6.00 to 8.00. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Corres. Conway Hall.

EDINBURGH. 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8.00. Trades Council Halls, 14 Picardy Place. Corres. E. Knox, 206 Dalry Road, Edinburgh EH11 2ES.

GLASGOW. Mondays 8.00. Woodside Halls, Clarendon St. Corres. R. Donnelly, 15 Napierhall Street.

GUILDFORD. 2nd and 4th Friday 7.00. Friends Meeting House, North Street. Corres. T. Bullen, 17 Bellfields Road, Guildford GU1 1QG. Tel (0483) 34958.

HARINGEY. Thursdays 8.00. West Green library, Vincent Road, Tottenham, London N15 (few minutes from Turnpike Lane tube). Corres. 17 Dorset Rd, N22.

ISLINGTON. For details of provisional meeting place phone Chris Dufton (272 6524). Corres. I. Westgate, 122 York Way Court, Copenhagen Street, N1.

LEWISHAM. 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8.15. Room 2, Davenport House, Davenport Road, London SE6. Corres. Davenport House.

MID HERTS. P. Mattingley, 27 Woodstock Rd, Broxbourne, Herts. Tel. 61-64872.

NORTH EAST. 1st and 3rd Wednesdays 8.00. Room L30 Edinburgh Building, Sunderland Polytechnic College, Chester Road, Sunderland. Corres. V. Maratty, 184 The Avenue, Deneside, Seaham.

NORTH WEST LONDON. 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8.00. Abbey Community Centre, Belsize Road, NW6 (corner of Abbey Road, next to Lillie Langtry pub). Corres. C. May, 1 Hanover Road, NW10. Tel. 459 3437.

REDBRIDGE. 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 8.00. Abbey Hall, 87 Axe Street, Barking (rear of Town Hall). Corres. D. Deutz, 4 St. Mary's Ave, London E11.

SOUTHEND. 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month, 8.00. 19 Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea. Corres. A. Partner, 28 Hambro Hill, Rayleigh, Essex. Rayleigh (0268) 774974.

SOUTH WEST LONDON. Mondays (except Bank holidays) 8.30. Head Office, 52 Clapham High Street, London SW4. Corres. 52 Clapham High Street, SW4.

SWANSEA. 2nd and 4th Mondays in month, 7.30. Queens Hotel, Gloucester Place. Corres. G. T. Williams, 19 Baptist Well St, Waun Wen, Swansea SA1 6FB. (0792) 464872.

WEST LONDON. Fridays 8.00. The Old Chiswick Town Hall, Turnham Green (corner of Sutton Court Rd.). Corres. E. Haynes, 127 Kingston Rd, Teddington, Middlesex.

WESTMINSTER. Thursday 8.30. Princess Royal, 47 Hereford Road, W2. (off Westbourne Grove). Corres. SPGB, 76 Ladbroke Grove, W11.

WEST YORKSHIRE. 3rd Monday in month, 7.30. Ring o' Bells pub, 18 Bolton Rd, Bradford 1. Corres. 20 Brandfort St. Bradford BD7 2ES. Tel. (0274) 75136.

Discussion Groups

BIRMINGHAM. 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 7.30. Dr. Johnson House, Bull Street. Corres. W. Mack, 36 Alderpsits Road, Shard End. Tel. (021) 748 5805.

CARDIFF. A. McNeeney, 51 Pen-y-lan Road, Roath, Cardiff. Tel. (0222) 390048.

MANCHESTER. Thursdays 8.30. The Crown Hotel, 321 Deansgate.

NORTHAMPTON. D. James, 19 Raeburn Road, Kingsley. Tel. (0604) 711225.

READING. E. Tasker, 42 Redhatch Drive, Earley.

STOKE-ON-TRENT. 1st Thurs in month 8.30. The Coachmakers Arms, Lichfield Street, Hanley. Corres. W. Mountfield, 28 Lewis St. Stoke.

For Information

BATH. B. McNeeney, 7 Garden Flat, Rivers Street. Tel. (0225) 331989.

BIRMINGHAM. W. Mack, 36 Alderpsits Road, Shard End, Birmingham B34 7RR.

BRISTOL. J. Flowers, 101 Chesterfield Road, St. Andrews, Bristol BS6 5DS.

DERBY. Frank V. Cash, 62 William Street, Derby DE1 3LZ.

DUNDEE. J. Finnie, 28 Hill Street.

EAST KILBRIDE. J. Thompson, 2 Balfour Terrace, Murray, East Kilbride. Tel. (32) 23083.

EDGWARE. A. Waite, 61 Fairfield Crescent. Tel. (01) 952 3556.

ESSEX/SUFFOLK. Mackenzie Dodds, Fern Cottage, Fern Hill, Glensford, Suffolk.

HARROW. Ian Stewart, 39 Eastcote Road, Pinner. Tel. 866 0216.

HARWICH. C. Bennett, 48 Ashley Road, Dovercourt, Harwich, Essex.

HULL. Peter Pink, 9 Beech Grove, Beverly Road.

MID LANCs. Brian Livesey, 149 Belfield Road, Accrington, Lancs.

HASLEMERE. R. Cox, 86 Lion Lane. Tel. (0428) 2885.

MILTON KEYNES. C. Kincaid, 14 Weavers Hill, Milton Keynes, MK11 2BD.

NEWPORT. Miles Webb, 5 Sedgemoor Court, Allt-y-ryn, Newport, Gwent.

NORWICH. Colin Green, 3 Bell Meadow, Higham. Tel. 985 468.

NOTTINGHAM. R. Powe, 193 Wellington Street, Long Eaton, Notts. Tel. (060) 76 2783.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT

The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:

- 1] That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e. land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2] That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3] That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4] That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5] That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6] That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7] That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8] The Socialist Party of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action, determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Anyone agreeing with the above principles and wishing to join should apply to nearest branch or Head Office.

Socialist Party of Great Britain
52 Clapham High Street, London SW4 7UN.
Tel. (01) 622 3811

The Executive Committee meets 7.30 every Tuesday at 52 Clapham High Street, SW4. Correspondence for the Executive Committee should be sent to the General Secretary at the above address. Letters containing postal orders, cheques to be crossed, made payable to SPGB and sent to A. Waite at the above address. Orders for literature should be sent to the Literature Dept. at the above address. Articles, correspondence and notices for the *Socialist Standard* to be sent to SSPC, 76 Ladbroke Grove, London W11.

THE TORY CUTS

TUC DAY OF ACTION— FOR WHAT?

It should be obvious — capitalism cannot be run in the workers' interest. The "Day of Action" is saying chuck out the Tories and put Labour back. "Thatcher Out!" and "Stop the Cuts!" are hollow catchwords suggesting futilely that Callaghan and Company back in power will have the answers. Capitalism has not got an acceptable face.

WHAT LABOUR DID IN POWER

What hypocrites Trade Union leaders and Labour MPs are. They claim to be opposed to the anti-working class policies of the Tory government, conveniently forgetting that it was the anti-working class policies of the recently demised Labour government which disillusioned so many workers, putting the Tories in power.

Don't forget

Under Labour: 1.5 million workers were on the unemployed scrapheap because it was not profitable to employ them.

Under Labour: The rich actually got richer — 1% possess more wealth than 80% of the whole population.

Under Labour: Most Trade Union leaders and Labour MPs supported the "social contract" to keep wages down.

Under Labour: Public spending was ruthlessly cut — by 2.8% in 1976-7 and by 6.3% in 1977-8.

Under Labour: The police were used to break strikes and the media was cynically manipulated to inflame public opinion against strikers.

RETURN OF OLD GANG

Mrs Thatcher and her cronies make no secret where they stand. Unashamedly they uphold the profit system, opposing every measure which threatens the power of the capitalists. Thatcher's heaven is the free market, where the rich can exploit the workers without too much interference, and where the poor are free to live in poverty and misery.

Booms, slumps, national rivalries and threats of war, are all continual and inevitable features of capitalism. The Tories respond to the present economic crises exactly as did the last Labour government: drastically cutting state spending on education, housing and health, while stepping up expenditure on the armed forces to £1 million per hour of every day.

REVOLUTION OR REFORM

Six Labour governments in over 55 years have not solved a single fundamental working class problem. The capitalist class — a privileged minority — still control the means of producing and distributing wealth. Workers still have to sell their energies to an employer for wages. The essentials of life are still produced primarily for capitalist profit. These are the fundamental features of capitalism, causing the major social ills of today — poverty, insecurity and war. Tackling these problems piecemeal

cannot be the answer, it has failed dismally in the past and will fail in the future.

Tweedledee-tweedledum, Tory-Labour roundabout politics have proven bankrupt. Instead the working class must organise knowledgeably, democratically and politically to dispossess the capitalist class of their ownership of wealth, take over the means of production and distribution and convert them into the common property of the whole community.

The Socialist Party of Great Britain rejects reformist policies and advocates social revolution. Capitalism cannot be made to work in the interest of the workers; those who claim otherwise are not realists — they have been wrong every time. Join us in the struggle for world socialism — the most worthwhile of causes — abolish wage slavery, establish common ownership and social equality.

